

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: N.A.

TAGS: AF

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

1. FOLLOWING THOROUGH REVIEW OF AVAILABLE RECORDS HERE AND EXTENSIVE CONVERSATION WITH MEMBERS, IT HAS BECOME EVIDENT THAT DEPARTMENT MUST ISSUE A CLARIFYING STATEMENT ON 1975 BRIEFING. WRITTEN RECORDS ARE SIMPLY SILENT ON THE CONTENT OF THE BRIEFING. O'NEILL CANNOT RECALL ANY DETAILS. CHRISTIANSEN INITIALLY DID NOT RECALL ANY DISCUSSION OF FINANCING QUESTION, DESPITE HAVING BEEN ASKED SPECIFICALLY ABOUT THIS BY CBS. IN RESPONSE TO SUBSEQUENT SPECIFIC INQUIRY FROM
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DEPARTMENT, CHRISTIANSEN SAID HE HAD VERY FAINT RECOLLECTION THAT FINANCING ISSUE MAY HAVE BEEN RAISED, BUT COULD NOT RECALL DETAILS. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE DEPARTMENT CONSIDERS IT FAIR TO ALL CONCERNED TO ISSUE STATEMENT ALONG LINES OUTLINED BELOW.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

THE DEPARTMENT WISHES TO COMMENT ON A RECENT PRESS REPORT CONCERNING A TRIP TO SOUTH AFRICA AND RHODESIA IN MARCH 1975 BY CONGRESSMEN DENT, ICHORD AND RUNNELS. THE PRESS ACCOUNT REPORTED THAT A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER TOLD THE

THE CONGRESSMEN DURING A BRIEFING PRIOR TO THEIR TRIP THAT THE DEPARTMENT HAD INFORMATION INDICATING THAT THE TRIP WAS BEING FUNDED BY THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT, ALTHOUGH THE OSTENSIBLE HOST WAS A PRIVATE BUSINESSMAN. THE STATE DEPARTMENT INITIALLY SUPPORTED THIS ACCOUNT OF THE BRIEFING ON THE BASIS OF ONE OFFICER'S RECOLLECTION. IT HAS NOW BEEN POSSIBLE FOR THE DEPARTMENT TO MAKE FURTHER INQUIRIES INTO THIS MATTER. THERE IS NO MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION OR OTHER CONTEMPORARY REPORT AVAILABLE WITH RESPECT TO THIS BRIEFING. THEREFORE, THE STATE DEPARTMENT IS UNABLE INDEPENDENTLY TO CORROBORATE THE CONTENTS OF THE BRIEFING. END TEXT. CHRISTOPHER

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